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(S) NATIONAL RECONNAISSANCE OFFICE
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OFFICE OF THE DIRECTOR

July 27, 1968

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MEMORANDUM FOR DIRECTOR, NRO STAFF
DIRECTOR OF CIA RECONNAISSANCE PROGRAMS
DIRECTOR OF SPECIAL PROJECTS, OSAP

SUBJECT: Evaluation of Photographic Reconnaissance
Collection Systems

There is a continuing need for a systematic approach to evaluation of photographic reconnaissance collection system characteristics and relating these to the usefulness of the products and the methods used to evaluate such usefulness. There have been several efforts toward this objective in the past and there are ongoing research and development efforts which contribute to it. However, informal discussions among members of the Reconnaissance Planning Group have recently highlighted the fact that there is still a dearth of generally accepted and widely understood data, criteria, and techniques for evaluating photographic reconnaissance systems. I believe that considerable progress has recently been made in isolating and understanding some of the variables affecting the performance of currently operational systems. It therefore appears that it is now appropriate to take stock of the situation and to determine whether the existing body of knowledge and understanding can be organized and codified. This would not only serve the needs of the intelligence community in program evaluation and planning but might also identify areas where research emphasis should be placed.

I would therefore appreciate it if you would appoint a representative to prepare, under the Chairmanship of a member of the NRO Staff, terms of reference suggesting a systematic approach to this problem. Such statement is to be outlined so that the various parameters that characterize photographic reconnaissance systems can be defined, measured and related, insofar as possible, to the utility of the

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photographic product for the extraction of intelligence. I propose that the terms of reference be submitted by September 15, 1968 and that a finite rather than an open-ended activity be planned, with a completion date around the end of 1968. In addition, the group should recommend the organization, the appropriate participants, and the procedures which they deem most useful to carry on the studies.

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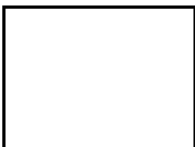


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Alexander H. Flax


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